





OFFICE OF THE  
**STUDENT**  
ADVOCATE

*Be Informed. Be Connected. Be Empowered.*

# Parent Leadership Toolkit: Tools for Effective Advocacy

441 4<sup>th</sup> Street NW, Suite 723N, Washington, DC 20001 | 202.741.4692



[studentadvocate.dc.gov](http://studentadvocate.dc.gov) |  [student.advocate@dc.gov](mailto:student.advocate@dc.gov) |  @DC\_Advocate



# Overview

---

As advocates, leaders, and community members, parents are capable of providing unique grassroots educational leadership in our schools. We cannot create high-quality schools without the partnership of parents. Empowering the voices of parents in our education system is critical to the success of our students.

Creating and establishing parent organizations are a useful and effective way to organize parent voices and amplify their power in the educational landscape. Effective advocacy involves identifying the purpose and objectives of the work in the communities, understanding the issues and opinions behind the causes, investing in the power of the advocates, and strategically leveraging available tools and skills to maximum utility.

This toolkit provides an outline of how to create and establish a parent organization with the right structure, leadership, and procedures for your school through the following steps:

1. Knowing the Issues
2. Understanding the Terms
3. Getting Started
4. Connecting Advocacy to Action, Goal/Agenda Setting, Establishing Mission & Vision
5. Nuts and Bolts – Establishing Procedures and Operations
6. Funding and Budgeting
7. Building Relationships and Partnerships, Establishing Trust, and Fostering Effective Communication
8. Diversity and Recruitment

# Step 1: Knowing the Issues

# Knowing the Issues

---

**What are the citywide issues? (i.e education, service, etc.)**

**What are the issues that your Ward/neighborhood is dealing with?**

**What issues are most important to you? (i.e. child's schools, etc.)**

# Why is it important to understand the issue[s]?

---

**To recruit allies**

**To understand opponents**

**To win arguments**

**To plan strategy and goals**

Community Tool Box

<http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/advocacy/advocacy-principles/overview/main>

# When planning strategy & goals

---

**Know where to gather information about the issue [s]**

**Understand where people stand of the issue[s]**

**Understand how your community response to change**

**Know if the issue[s] divides and links the community**

**Do your research**

Community Tool Box

<http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/advocacy/advocacy-principles/overview/main>